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A

LETTER

To the Reverend

Dr. Chauncy,

On Account of some Passages relating to the Rev.
Mr. WHITEFIELD, in his Book intitled *Seasonable
Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England.*

By George Whitefield, A. B.

Late of Pembroke-College OXON.

Veniam petimusque damusque vicissim

HOR.

B O S T O N : N. E.

Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND and T. GREEN in *Queenstreet*

1745.



Preface to the READER.



THE following Letter, excepting a few Alterations which I have made in it since, was written according to its Date. I should have published it much sooner, had I not hoped that the Manner and Method of my Preaching would, by the Blessing of GOD, have rendered it needless.--- But being called upon from different Quarters to give an Account of my Conduct and some Part of my Writings, I now think it my Duty to publish the Letter, not doubting but that the REV. DR. CHAUNCY will receive it in Love and in the same Spirit in which it was written by

Courteous Reader,

Boston, Jan.
18th. 1744, -5.

thy affectionate Friend,

and willing Servant,



G. WHITEFIELD.

Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND and T. GREEN in Queen-Street

1745.

Portsmouth, Piscataqua,
Nov. 19th. 1744.

Reverend and dear S I R,

It is the Duty of Christians in general, so it is incumbent on Gospel Ministers in particular, to avoid giving any just Offence to Jew or Gentile, or the Church of God. And if any Occasion of Offence has been given, either by their Conduct, Conversation or Writings, all possible Care ought to be taken to have such Offences removed, especially if they are under Apprehensions of being called by a speedy Dissolution before the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls.--- This, Reverend Sir, I take to be my Case.---By a Book which you have lately put out, Intitl'd *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England*, I find some Part of my Conduct, and some Passages in my printed Performances, have given you in particular such a Disgust, as to be looked upon as the Cause in a great Degree, of several of those Disorders, which you say have overspread the Churches since my last Departure from *America*.--- Such a Charge or Insinuation, as *New-England* is peculiarly dear to me, and there is nothing I wish for more on Earth, than the Prosperity of all her Ministers and Churches, cannot but give me some sensible Pain.--- And as I know not how soon I may relapse again into my late dangerous Disorder, I am willing to improve my present Respite from Pain, and little Retirement from more publick Labours, in sitting down to give you all the Satisfaction I can concerning those Passages in your Book which relate to me, so that if I die, Survivors may see, I was not altogether unwilling to own my Faults, or if I live, the Jealousies and Fears which have been rais'd in the Minds both of my Friends and Enemies, as far as in me lies, may be allayed and removed.--- And I am the more encouraged to do this, Reverend Sir, in a Letter to you, because at the

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Conclusion

Conclusion of your Preface, you are pleas'd to say, " Nor shall I regard the little Squibbs that may be thrown at me by those who think the Cause of Truth will be better served by *railing*, than *arguing*. " I shall not mispend my Time to take Notice of what may be said by such ; but if any will be at the Pains to give what I have offered the Publick a fair and Christian Examination, I shall think my self obliged to make them some suitable Acknowledgement." As for Railing, at present I find not the least Inclination to it.--- That compassionate Redeemer who has lately made my Bed in my Sickness, and given me (I would speak it with Humility) some near Views of the heavenly World, I trust has so far calm'd my Spirit as to make me willing to wash my Enemies Feet, much more to give a peaceable and quiet Answer to those who profess themselves his and his Church's Friends.---And therefore thro' the Assistance of the blessed Spirit, I will write to you, *Reverend Sir*, in the same Manner as I would converse with you, was you at my Bed-Side, or to see me giving up the Ghost as soon as our Conversation was ended.

If you please *Reverend Sir*, I will begin where you have begun with me, *viz.* Page 36th, where being about to speak of the bad Things attending this Work, you say, " I shall *first* mention ITINERANT PREACHING --- " This say you had it's *Rise* (at least in these Parts) from Mr. *Whitefield* ; though I could never see, I own, upon what Warrant, either from *Scripture* or *Reason*, He went about preaching from one *Province* and *Parish* to another, where the Gospel was already preached, and by Persons as well qualified for the Work, as He can pretend to be. I charitably hope, his Design herein was good : But might it not be leavened with some undesirable Mixture ? Might he not, at first, take up this Practice from a mistaken Thought of some *extraordinary Mission* from God ? Or, from the undue Influence of *too high an Opinion* of his own *Gifts* and *Graces* ? And when he had got into this Way, might he not be too much encouraged to go on in it, from the *popular Applauses* every where so liberally heaped on Him" ? All this, *Reverend Sir*, might possibly have been true concerning me.---But have you not prejudged me ? Did I not at the latter End of the Account of God's Dealings with me already published, promise, as soon as I had Time and Freedom, to relate how I was led out into my present Way of acting ? And should you not have waited for this, and then from the Account itself inferred

inferred what might be the Motives that induced me to commence and continue an Itinerant Preacher? Such an Account I have begun, and whenever God shall give me Strength and Leisure, will finish and print it. In the mean time, *Reverend Sir*, I would humbly inquire, whether we must leave off acting for God, 'till we feel that our Actions are not *leaven'd with some undesirable Mixture*? I am perswaded you are no Friend to that *unscriptural Doctrine of sinless Perfection*.--- And yet if a Man be condemned because what he says or does may be leavened with some undesirable Mixture, what is this but requiring sinless Perfection from him? Alas! I find some *undesirable Mixture* in every Thing I do or speak. I can say with the Apostle, "When I would do Good, Evil is present with me"; and with Bishop *Beveridge*, "I cannot pray but I sin, I cannot preach but I sin; my Repentance wants to be repented of, and my Tears to be wash'd over again in the Blood of the dear Redeemer". And if every Thing I do must be condemned because it may be leavened with some undesirable Mixture, I believe every Action of mine (not to say your's and every Saint of God) must be condemned, 'till we shake off this corruptible and put on Incorruption.

You also blame me, for coming "where the Gospel was already preached, and by Persons as well qualified for the Work as I can pretend to be." But did I come unask'd? Nay did not some of those very Persons *who were as well qualified for the Work as I can pretend to be*, send me Letters of Invitation? Yes assuredly they did, or otherwise in all probability I had never seen *New-England*.--- But without waiting for a further Account of God's Dealings with me, you think you have sufficient Reason to suggest that I took up this Way of preaching from a mistaken Thought of having some EXTRAORDINARY MISSION from God, or from the undue Influence of *too high an Opinion* of my own *Gifts and Graces* &c.--- And therefore you further ask (Page *ibid*) "If he had not been under too strong a Bias from something or other of this Nature, why so fond of preaching always himself, to the exclusion not of his Brethren only, but his Fathers, in Grace and Gifts and Learning, as well as *Age*? And why so ostentatious and assuming as to alarm many Towns, by proclaiming his Intentions in the *publick Prints* to preach such a Day in such a Parish, the next Day in such a one, and so on, as he past through the Country; and all this, without the Knowledge either of *Pastors* or *People*" in

" in most Places". But what Foundation, *Reverend Sir*, are these
 Queries built upon ? Or how can it be proved that I was so fond of
 preaching always my self to the exclusion not of my Brethren only, but
 my Fathers in Grace and Gifts and Learning, as well as Age ? I was I
 think in all but three Lord's Days in *Boston*---The first I heard the Rev.
Dr. Colman in the Forenoon, notwithstanding he ask'd me to preach
 after he was up in the Pulpit and had finished the first Prayer.---I would
 also have been an Auditor in the Afternoon, had not your Reverend Col-
 league *Mr. Foxcroft* pressed me to preach for him, which at his Request
 I complied with, tho' I was to preach immediately after in the Com-
 mon.---Part of another Lord's Day I heard the Reverend *Dr. Sewall*, and
 I preach'd another Lord's Day Morning and Afternoon, because it was
 judged to be the most convenient Season for collecting for the *Georgia Or-*
phans --- The Thursday Lecture thro' repeated Sollicitations I preached,
 and partly to recommend it to the People, because it was generally as my
 Brethren and Fathers informed me, but very poorly attended. --- The
 other Times were all Occasional and Extraordinary, at the Desire of
 the People and my Brethren and Fathers, who were so far from think-
 ing I thereby excluded them, that they generally attended upon my
 Ministry, and as I have been inform'd found the People more ready
 to attend them after my Departure than before. For whatever you
 may think my Opinion of the *Boston* Ministers was at that Time,
 yet I always recommended them, and instead of encouraging People to
 seperate, constantly exhorted them (as I would do again) to attend
 upon their Ministrations.--- You are pleased to add further, " Why so
 " ostentatious and assuming as to alarm so many Towns, by proclaim-
 " ing his Intentions, in the public Prints, to preach such a Day in such
 " a Parish, the next Day in such a one, and so on, as he past thro' the
 " Country, and all this without the Knowledge, either of *Pastors* or
 " *People* in most Places" ? And may I not reply ; And why is the
 Reverend *Dr. Chauncy* thus hasty in judging me, and laying to my
 Charge Things that I know not ? That I gave Notice in the publick
 Prints of my Preaching in different Places at different Times, is true---
 But that this proceeded from Ostentation, is what the great Searcher of
 Hearts can alone determine.---As I was a Stranger, passing thro' the
 Country, and so many either out of Curiosity or some other Principle,
 were desirous to hear me, it was judged expedient by my Friends, to
 give People previous and publick Notice of my Intention to preach
 among them ; and to the best of my Knowledge every Advertise-
 ment

ment of this Kind was pen'd by the Direction of some one or more of my Brethren and Fathers, and as far as I know to the contrary, upon Application made to me or them by either the Minister or People, or both, belonging to every Place where I preached.---Accordingly wherever I came, in all outward Appearance at least, I was cordially received by Ministers and People, and had I accepted all the Invitations that were given me by Ministers and People, I might have continued in *New-England* many Months longer than I did.

You go on further, *Reverend Sir*, and say Page 37th. "And what became of his *little Flock* all the while? This Gentleman (if I don't mistake) expresses a very contemptuous Thought of *Non-Residents* and *Pluralists*, when he makes that Remark, in one of his Journals, 'The Towns thro' *Connecticut*, and the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*--are well Peopled--Every five or ten Miles you have a Meeting-House, and I believe there is no such Thing as a *Pluralist* or *Non-Resident* Minister in both *Provinces*.' "And what is the mighty Difference (so far as a *particular Flock* is concern'd in it's *Pastor's Labours*) between an *Itinerant Preacher*, absent from his Charge seven Eights of his Time, and a *Non-Resident* Minister? Or, between a *Pluralist*, and one that acts as tho' *all the Parishes* in a *Country* were his *proper Cure*." Part of these Questions I cannot think of answering better at this Time, than in the Words I had lately Occasion to write upon a like Account, to a dignified Clergyman of the Church of *England*.--- 'I would observe to you further, that I wish every *Non-resident Minister* in *England* could give as good an Account of their *Non-residence* as I of my *Absence* from *Savanna*.--- To satisfy you, *Reverend Sir*, I will acquaint you with the whole---When I first went Abroad, I was appointed to be Minister of *Frederica*.--- But upon my arrival in *Georgia*, finding there was no Minister at *Savannab*, and no Place of Worship at *Frederica*, by the Advice of Magistrates and People, I continued at *Savannab*, teaching publicly, and from House to House, and catechising the Children Day by Day, during the whole Time of my first Continuance in *Georgia*; except about a Fortnight, in which I went to *Frederica* to visit the People, and to see about building a Church, for which I had given *fifty Pounds* out of some Money I had collected, and of which I have given a public Account.--- In about four Months I came over to *England* to receive Priest's Orders, and collect Money for building an Orphan-House.---At the Request of many, the Honourable Trustees

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presented

presented me to the Living of *Savannah*. --- I accepted it, but refused the Stipend of *fifty Pounds* per Annum, which they generously offered me.--- Neither did I put them to any Expence during my Stay in *England*, where I thought it my Duty to abide 'till I had collected a sufficient Sum, wherewith I might begin the Orphan-House, I should have left *England* sooner, had I not been prevented by the Embargo.--- However, I was more easy, because the Honourable Trustees, I knew, had sent over another Minister, who arrived soon after I left the Colony.--- Upon my second Arrival at *Georgia*, finding the Care of the Orphan-House and the Care of the Parish, too great a Task for me, I immediately wrote over to the Honourable Trustees to provide another Minister.--- In the mean while, as most of my Parishioners were in Debt, or ready to leave the Colony for want of being employed, and as I believed erecting an Orphan-House would be the *best* Thing I could do for them and their Posterity, I thought it my Duty, from Time to Time, to answer the Invitations that were sent me to preach Christ Jesus in several Parts of *America*, and to raise further Collections towards carrying on the Orphan-House.--- The Lord stirred up many to be ready to distribute and willing to communicate on this Occasion.--- I always came Home furnished with Provisions and Money, most of which was expended among the People, and by [this Means the northern Part of the Colony almost intirely subsisted for a considerable Time.--- This was asserted, not very long ago, before the *House of Commons*.--- And now, Sir, judge you whether my Non-residence was any Thing like the Non-residence of most of the *English* Clergy? When I was absent from my Parishioners I was not loitering or living at Ease, but preaching Christ Jesus, and begging for them and theirs :--- And when I returned, it was not to fleece my Flock, and then go and spend it upon my Lusts, or lay it up for a Fortune for my self and my Relations. No : freely as I had received, freely I gave : And therefore *when the Ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the Eye saw me it gave Witness to me : Because I delivered the Poor that cried, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him.--- The Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me ; and I caused the Widows Heart to sing for Joy.* --- But notwithstanding such like Professions as these, which I have frequently made, in the most publick Manner, you seem not to be satisfied ; nay conclude this Paragraph thus : “ And some are in the Opinion, it han’t been to Mr. *Whitefield’s*

“ *Whitefield's Disadvantage, on temporal Accounts, that he has travelled*
 “ *about the World in Quality of an Itinerant Preacher* --- He has cer-
 “ *tainly made large Collections* : And if, in the doing of this, he had
 “ *a Fellow-feeling with the Orphans*, 'tis no more than might be ex-
 “ *pected*. No one, I believe besides himself, can tell the *Amount* of
 “ *the Presents* he received in this Town as well as in the other Places
 “ *for his own proper Use*.” This I think, *Reverend Sir*, is one of the
 most Ungentleman-like as well as uncharitable Things you are pleas'd
 to mention concerning me. You speak indeed in the Character of a
 third Person, that this is the Opinion of *some*, but does not your Man-
 ner of writing shew, that 'tis your own Opinion also. It is true, as
 you say, *Reverend Sir*, “ *I have certainly made large Collections* --- But
 then have I not given a publick and fair Account of the expending
 them ? Can any Proof be given of my *Fellow-feeling*, (I suppose you
 mean a *Fellow-sharing*) *with the Orphans* ? Is such a Thing *no more*
than might be expected ? Surely *Doctor Chauncy* was not one of these
 Expectants ; for then what can he think me to be better than a con-
 summate Villain ? And had I my Accounts here and my kind Bene-
 factors would give me Leave, I could easily and freely acquaint you
 with what I received for my own private Use at *Boston* ; as *for other*
Places in New-England, I cannot recollect that I had any personal
 Presents made me at all. However this I know, that it has not been
 much for my *temporal Advantage* that I have travelled about the World
 in Quality of an *Itinerant Preacher*--- for I might have had Preferment,
 and made what the World calls a Fortune, & set down & nestled quietly :
 But for above these ten Years I have and hope always shall profess a
voluntary Poverty --- If when I die it can be said, that I owe no One
 any Thing but Love, it is all I desire--And if I had been taken off
 by my late violent Disorder, my Will, and the Circumstances wherein
 I should have left my dear Yoke-fellow, would have shewn you what
 Fellow-feeling I have had with the Orphans.

The next Passage I think proper to reply to, is in Page 126th. Where-
 in after having complained in the preceeding Paragraph of Persons ex-
 pressing their religious Joy by breaking out into *bearty loud Laughter*,
 you express your self thus--- “ This of Laughing, so far as I am ac-
 “ *quainted with the History of the Church*, is a Method of expressing
 “ *religious Joy*, peculiar to the present Times ; nor can I think from
 “ whence it should take its Rise, unless Mr. *Whitefield* and *Tennent*.---

“ The

"The former of these Gentlemen was sometimes observed to speak of the Affairs of Salvation, with a Smile in his Countenance."—And can it justly, *Reverend Sir*, be deemed a Fault in any Preacher when talking out of the Abundance of his Heart, of the Loveliness of the ever lovely Jesus, the Joys of Heaven, and the Comforts of the Holy Ghost, to express, and give an Indication of his inward Joy, by a Smile in his Countenance? Is there any Thing inconsistent in such a Conduct with the greatest Reverence and most awful Sense of the divine Presence? Are we not told in that *inspired* History of the Church, Gen. 17th Ver. 17th. That *Abraham* after he had received a gracious Message from Heaven, *fell upon his Face*, under a deep Sense no Doubt of the divine Condescension, & at the same time *laughed*? And can it justly be inferred that the People in *New-England* could any Way learn to express their *religious Joy* by a *loud and hearty Laugh* from my being sometimes observed at *Boston* to speak of the Affairs of Salvation, with a Smile in my Countenance?

"That Spirit of rash censorious and uncharitable judging, which you say, has been so prevalent in the Land, you are pleased to affirm, Page 140th, *appear'd first in Mr. Whitefield*". What, *Reverend Sir*, did no rash censorious and uncharitable judging appear in *New England* before I came into it? Sorry should I be from my inmost Soul if I introduc'd it. — But how, *Dear Sir*, do you make this out? To prove it, you proceed thus --- "Who seldom preached, but he had something or other to say against *unconverted Ministers*:" And was there any Harm, *Reverend Sir*, in this? Are not *unconverted Ministers* the Bane of the Christian Church? Had not the Prophets in the old and Apostles in the new Testament, frequently something to say against them? You proceed thus, --- "And what he delivered, especially, at some certain Times, had an evident Tendency to fill the Minds of People with evil *Surmisings* against the *Ministers*, as tho' they were for the most Part, carnal, unregenerate Wretches--- He often spake of them in the Lump, as *Pharisees, Enemies of Christ Jesus*, and the *worst Enemies* he had." That I spake of *unconverted Ministers* in the Lump, as *Pharisees, Enemies of Christ Jesus*, and the *worst Enemies* I had, I believe is true; but that I spake of the *Ministers of New England* in this Way, I utterly deny. --- You carry on the Charge against me in the same Paragraph thus --- "And as though he had not done enough in *Preaching*, to
" beget

" beget in People an ill Opinion of the *Ministers*, he expresses his
 " Fear, in his Journal of *New-England*, lest " many, nay the most that
 " preach do not experimentally know Christ." This Reflection he im-
 " mediately levels against the *Ministers* in *this Land*: And its the
 " more rash and uncharitable, as he past through the Country in *Post-
 haste*, having neither Opportunity nor Advantage, to know the real
 " Character of one tenth Part of the *Ministers* he thus freely con-
 " demns." I confess, this was too unguarded -- For whether in Fact
 it was or is true or not, that most that preach in *New-England* did not
 experimentally know Christ, yet I ought to have taken more Time
 before I deliver'd my Judgment.--- I thank you, *Reverend Sir*, for point-
 ing out this Fault unto me. --- But that I had a Design either in
 preaching or writing to alienate People's Minds from their standing
 Ministers, I utterly disavow. --- My whole Design in *preaching* was to
 shew the unspeakable Danger of Persons taking upon them to preach
 Christ to others, till they are acquainted with him themselves, and in
my Writings to give an impartial Account, as far as I was informed, how
 Affairs which concern the Kingdom of God stood in *New-England*.

My Treatment of Arch-Bishop *Tillotson* I find likewise has given
 you great Offence.---And I acknowledge that I spake of his *Person* in
 too strong Terms, and too rashly condemn'd his *State* when I ought
 only to have censured his *Doctrine*. -- This, *Reverend Sir*, I believe
 cannot be justified by any *orthodox Divine*.---Not because "He does
 not in all Things agree with me," but because, if we may judge by
 the constant Tenor of his Discourses, he does not agree with the Form
 of sound Words delivered to us in the lively Oracles of God. --- I appeal
 to any rightly informed Reader, whether the great Doctrines of Justi-
 fication by Faith alone, the Imputation of *Adam's Sin*, imputed Righte-
 ousness of Jesus Christ &c. are not pleaded against in his Discourses?
 And may I not venture to affirm, that if Arch-Bishop *Tillotson's* Divi-
 nity be right, then the great Arch-Bishops *Whitgift*, *Abbot*, *Usher*, Bishop
Hall, *Davenant*, Mr. *Willard*, *Stoddard*, *Hooker*, *Shepard*, *Cotton*, *Norton*,
 nay many of the Articles of all the reformed Churches must be wrong;
 For they are diametrically opposite the one to the other. --- Your Rev.
 Colleague in a Sermon printed soon after I left *Boston* has wrote excel-
 lently upon *Evangelical Preaching*, and therein singled out two Dis-
 courses of the Arch Bishop's, " which (to use his own Words) tho'
 " perhaps less censurable than many others of his Sermons, yet have

“ a Variety of exceptionable Strokes in them.” And supposing it true that Dr. *Edwards*, and I thro’ him, have been mistaken in some particular Quotations from the Arch-Bishop’s Discourses, do not all his Writings concur to prove that he was no evangelical Preacher ? And may I not venture further to insinuate, that it is to be feared the Discourses of Arch-Bishop *Tillotson* have been more instrumental of corrupting the Clergy of the present Generation, and propagating Arminianism among us, than any Book in *England* ? And therefore tho’ I am sorry that I have judged his *State* and *Person*, and not spoken sufficiently in Commendation of his great Candour and Moderation, yet I rejoyce in the Testimony I have born against his *Doctrines*, yea and will rejoyce.

But what Reason was there, *Reverend Sir*, for your mentioning what Mr. *Seward* wrote concerning his Grace ? I think your Design was to shew the Spirit of rash judging and censuring which was gone out into *this Land* ; but you say Page 144th, “ Let me add, as a further Representation of that monstrous Spirit of censorious judging that has been let loose upon the *World*, a few of the Words of Mr. *Seward*.” --- Is not this shooting a little besides, or rather beyond your intended Mark ? Or why did you choose to go thus a little out of the Way “ because they are the Words of one of the dearest and most intimate Friends Mr. *Whitefield* had ?” Am I answerable for all my dearest and most intimate Friends say or do ? Or is it reasonable that I should Account for all they write when distant from me ? And yet this was the Case between me and my honoured Friend *William Seward*, Esq; who, notwithstanding he might be worthy of Blame for some Parts of his Writings (and he that is not let him cast the first Stone) yet he was an Israelite indeed, a Man rich in Faith and good Works, one whose Heart devised liberal Things, and did as much for the blessed Jesus in the few Years he lived after his Conversion, as any private Christian Gentleman of his Circumstances that I have heard of : Indeed he was one of whom the World was not worthy. --- He has entred into his Rest now above four Years. --- And if you blame him, *Reverend Sir*, for censuring the Arch-Bishop because he was now *dead*, and express yourself Page 146th, as surprized at it, would it not have been as well if you had let Mr. *Seward*’s Ashes slept also, and been content, as more immediately pertinent to the Design of your Book, to have mentioned the Faults and rashness of me his unworthy Friend ?

Was

Was it not equally foreign, *Reverend Sir*, to your Purpose, to mention any Thing about Mr. *Barber*, who has been at the Orphan-House ever since I left *America*, and consequently could have no Hand in the late religious Disorders of *New-England*. --- I have read over that Letter of his which you are pleased to extract Page 189, out of my Journal, and after the maturest Deliberation, cannot say it appears to me to contain any Thing that deserves so hard a Name as DOWNRIGHT GROSS IDOLATRY.--- The Words you judge so exceptionable are these--- " I am now waiting at the Post of your Door for Admission." This indeed I think is too humble an Expression, but I inserted it innocently, not to exalt my self, but to shew the Humility of the Writer.-- Mr. *Barber* goes on and writes, " Tho' I am unworthy, my Lord is " worthy, in whose Name, I trust, I come." This the Reverend Dr. *Chauncy* writes in large Characters, and says, " He (viz. Mr. *Barber*) " makes Use of the great Saviour as a Medium of Approach to a frail " mortal Man." But if this be *gross Idolatry*, I have been guilty of it frequently in my late Sickness, when I have told my Friends, tho' I was utterly unworthy of their Care, yet Jesus Christ whose I am, and whom I desire to serve, was worthy, and that he would take what was done unto me as done unto himself. --- I never heard a *Beggar* charged with *Idolatry* for asking an Alms of a frail mortal Man in the Name and for the Sake of Jesus Christ. And this is the only Light in which I ever did and even now can consider the Words in Mr. *Barber's* Letter.-- If you judge otherwise, all I can say, *Reverend Sir*, is, that your Judgment is your own, and you are welcome in this and every other Passage in my Journals or Writings, to judge for your self: --- Only I pray God to give you and me, and all the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel, a right Judgment in all Things.

Whether or not you have formed a right and candid Judgment of the Passages you have been pleas'd to collect out of the Account of God's Dealings with me, I shall leave to your further Consideration.-- They are introduced by you Page 178th thus,--- " Another Thing, I " can't but think of dangerous Tendency, is, *that* Regard to *Impulses* " and *Impressions*, which has prevailed among too many, their *Aptness* " to take the Motion of their own Minds for something, *divinely extra-* " *ordinary*, or to put *those Constructions* upon *common Occurrences* " which there is no Ground for but in their *own Imagination*." This *Reverend Sir*, you would as it seems also father upon me :-For you go on
and

and say, "Mr. *Whitefield* had evidently a *turn of Mind* too much
 "disposing him this Way."--- Nay you say, "this appears in him all
 "along from his being a *Lad*, according to the *Account* he has given
 "the World of himself :--- One of the first Things he thought worthy
 of *publick Notice* is, ' That his Mother was us'd to say, even when he
 ' was an Infant, that she expected more Comfort from him than any
 ' other of her Children.' And adds upon it, ' This with the Circum-
 ' stance of my being *born in an Inn* has often been of Service to me, in
 ' exciting me to make good my *Mother's Expectations*, and to follow
 ' the Example of my dear Saviour who was *born in a Manger* ; (or as
 it should be, *born in a Stable*) belonging to an Inn.' And what is
 there in this Passage, that looks like what you lay down as the Ground-
 Work or Cause of it ? Is there any Harm, or can it be justly termed
 laying too great a Stress, to make a religious Improvement of what
 we hear our Parents say, or the Circumstances our Saviour is pleas'd to
 place us in ?

The Account of God's Dealings with me when at *Bristol*, seems also
 to have given you Offence : You say, Page 179th. "He observes when
 "at *Bristol*, tho' in an *unconverted* State at that Time, ' That God
 ' gave him great Foretastes of his Love, and filled him with such un-
 ' speakable Raptures in *St. John's Church*; that he was carried out *beyond*
 ' himself.' --- "But in the midst of these *Illuminations* (he adds)
 ' Something *secretly whispered*, this would not last'--- And is there
 any Thing, *Reverend Sir*, in this that may justly be stiled *Chimerical*
 or *Enthusiastical* ?--- As you have had to deal with Souls so many Years,
 have you never found any Instances of Persons that could tell you of
 many Strivings and Drawings and Illuminations of the blessed Spirit
 that they could reflect upon after their Conversion, which the great
 God visited them with before they were effectually called ? I have met
 with Abundance. And as for my saying ' in the midst of these *Illumi-*
nations, something *secretly whispered*, this would not last', I mean no
 more by it, than that I had a secret Suspicion, that this would not
 hold : Which my own Experience sadly proved to be true soon after.
 The Account (refer'd to in the same Page) that I gave to (my Sister,
 ' when all other Doors were shut, that God would provide for me some
 ' other Way' : As likewise that Impression made upon me, ' that I
 should preach and print' ; as likewise my Dream about going to the
 Prisoners, subsequent Providences made me think they were of God'.---
 Doubtless,

Doubtless *Reverend Sir*, there are such Things! as some Impressions coming from God, as well as others from the Devil. I would never judge of them, but as they agree with the written Word, and are explained by subsequent Providences.--- I would like *Mary* lay up all such Things in my Heart, and wait upon God to see by the Dealings of his Providence and Grace, whether they come from him or not.

You are likewise pleased to blame me for what I have said about being led by the Spirit of God into the Knowledge of divine Things, and being guided *even in the minutest Circumstances* when reading the holy Scriptures: But could I have spoken more honourably of the written Word, or given a better Proof of making it my standing Rule? What better Medium can we make Use of to get divine Knowledge, than the lively Oracles? Or who can lead us into this Knowledge, but the Holy Spirit? And if a Sparrow does not fall to the Ground without the Knowledge of our heavenly Father; and if the very Hairs of our Head are all numbred, and the greatest Events are generally brought about by a Series of seemingly the *minutest Circumstances*, why is not God to be consulted in them; and where is the Enthusiasm of expecting that by Prayer and considering his Word, and consulting his Providences, we shall know the Way wherein he would have us to go?

But there is one Passage in my Life, which you reckon not only more surprizing than the other before mentioned, but also *very sinful*.--- The Passage is this; Page 179th. "One Day perceiving an uncommon Drought, and a *noisome Clamminess* in my Mouth, and using Things to allay my Thirst, but in vain; it was suggested to me, that when Jesus Christ cried out, I thirst, his Sufferings were near over.-- Upon this, I threw my self upon the Bed, cried out, I thirst, I thirst.-- Soon after I perceived my Load to go off; a Spirit of Mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was truly to rejoyce in the Lord.--- At first after this, I could not avoid singing Psalms wherever I was; but my Joy gradually became more *settled*, and blessed be God, has abode and increased in my Soul, saving a few casual Intermissions, ever since."--- What Parts of this Account are sinful you have not directly told.--- If I should say it was not thus suggested to me, I should lie. And that this Suggestion came from the good and not evil Spirit, is evident from the Effect.--- My crying I thirst, I thirst,

was

was not to put my self upon a Level with Jesus Christ.-- But when I said those Words *I thirst, I thirst*, my Soul was in an Agony, I thirsted for God's Salvation, and a Sense of the divine Love. --- I thirsted for a clear Discovery of my Pardon through Jesus Christ, and the Seal of the Spirit.-- I was at the same Time enabled to look up to and act Faith upon the glorious Lord Jesus as dying for Sinners, and felt the blessed Effects of it, as mentioned in my Life; and for which I trust I shall Praise the Father of Mercies and God of all Consolations thro' the endless Ages of Eternity.

I know, but of one Thing more that you are pleased to lay to my Charge; *viz.* my talking so freely about unconverted Ministers.-- My settled Sentiments concerning them are these,--- That they are seldom made Use of to convert others I verily believe: But if I have any where said what may be construed to imply, that it is *impossible* that unconverted Ministers should be Instrumental in converting others, or that their Administrations in the visible Church are invalid, as it was not my Intention, I would revoke it.

And now, *Reverend Sir*, what shall I say more? You see by my writing the present Frame of my Soul. --- I hope you will discover nothing in it unbecoming a sick Man.--- I write this under the immediate Views of a happy Eternity, and joyce in the Prospect of that Day, wherein I shall appear before a compassionate Judge, who will cover all my Infirmities with the Mantle of his everlasting Righteousness, and graciously accept my poor and weak Efforts to promote his Kingdom. --- I beg, *Reverend Sir*, an Interest in your Prayers, that I may glorify God whether by Life or Death; and praying that you may be taught of God to preach the Truth as it is in Jesus, turn many to Righteousness, and shine in the Kingdom of Heaven as the Stars in the Firmament for ever and ever, I subscribe my self, *Reverend and dear Sir,*

Your most affectionate humble Servant,



George Whitefield.

